

11. (Amended) A method for treating a patient having a liver disease of viral origin, said disease being marked by lower than normal levels of IFN-alpha 5, said method comprising a step of administering to the patient an amount of IFN-alpha 5 or a nucleotide sequence encoding IFN-alpha 5 that is effective to treat the disease.

Please add the following new claims:

23. (New) The method according to claim 11, comprising the step of assaying liver cells of the patient for lower than normal levels of IFN-alpha 5 prior to said step of administering.

24. (New) The method according to claim 11, wherein the liver disease is chronic hepatitis C.

25. (New) The method according to claim 11, wherein the liver disease is cirrhosis.

26. (New) The method according to claim 11, wherein the liver disease is hepatocellular carcinoma.

27. (New) The method according to claim 11, wherein the patient is a human.